

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 11, 2023

Ms. Shalanda Young
Director of the United States Office of Management and Budget
Office of Management and Budget
Office of Federal Procurement Policy
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Young,

Requested policy change at OMB

One of the many ways we can support military spouse entrepreneurs and bridge the unemployment gap is through federal contracting opportunities. That is why we respectfully request your agency:

- Make a federal procurement policy change allowing entities to self-identify as U.S. Military Spouse-Owned Business in the Federal Procurement Data System.
- Provide an answer on what support, either administratively or through annual appropriations, you need from Congress to carry out this policy change.

The need

While military spouse owned small businesses can compete for federal contracting opportunities across agencies, we want to make sure that these entrepreneurs are being adequately represented and accounted for.

The federal government does not currently track military spouse participation levels in government-wide contracting opportunities. As a result, there is no way for Congress to know how many military spouses bid for and win federal contracts, or about potential trends in the businesses' participation levels so we can begin to address any deficiencies that might exist.

Federal Procurement Data System

As you know, the purpose of the Federal Procurement Data System, overseen by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy within your agency, is to be a centralized database for government contracting transactions with the goal of ensuring trust and transparency. The award information available in this system is used by the President, Congress, Government Accountability Office (GAO), and other agencies to inform policy decisions and provide reports on trends.

Additionally, the Federal Procurement Data System already contains a Data Element Dictionary with a Data Entity list composed of many different self-identified businesses, including women-owned, veteran-owned, service-disabled veteran owned, Asian-American owned, Black American owned, and many others. The federal government must step up and finally recognize military spouse owned businesses by adding them to this list.

Challenges faced by military spouses

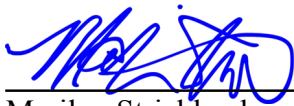
Military spouses step up in service to our nation in many meaningful ways, but employment discrimination, access to childcare, and other challenges continue to take a toll on their ability to stay employed and find new employment. In fact, military spouses face a 20% unemployment rate, with almost 63% reporting underemployment [\[1\]](#). As a result, many spouses turn to self-employment and entrepreneurship to provide for their families.

We must do everything we can to support these entrepreneurs and that starts by ensuring they are recognized in our Federal Procurement Data System.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to hearing from you and working together to address this important matter.

[\[1\] Blue star families annual survey](#)

Sincerely,



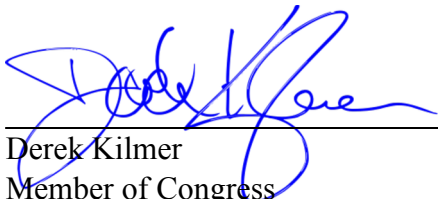
Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress



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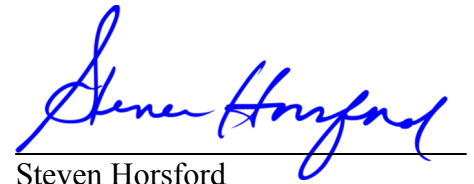
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